

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SECTO 05003 290326Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----290327Z 122504 /73
O 290215Z MAY 77
FM USDEL SECRETARY AIRCRAFT
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTO 05003

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, IR
SUBJECTT: SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH IRANIAN AMBASSADOR
ZAHEDI

1. AMBASSADOR ZAHEDI CALLED ON THE SECRETARY SATURDAY MORNING, MAY 28, TO DISCUSS THE SHAH'S CONCERN ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF RECENTLY ANNOUNCED U.S. ARMS TRANSFER POLICY DECISIONS FOR U.S.-IRANIAN MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP. ZAHEDI RECALLED THAT THE SHAH HAD INFORMED HIM OF HIS PLEASURE WITH RESULTS OF HIS TALK WITH THE SECRETARY IN TEHRAN. ZAHEDI ALSO NOTED THAT THE SHAH HAD WEIGHED IN WITH SOME EFFECT WITH BHUYMO ABOUT THE NEED TO PATCH UP HIS RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. THEN, ZAHEDI SAID, HE HAD RECEIVED A LETTER THREE DAYS AGO FROM THE SHAH, WHICH HE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS.
2. THE SHAH HAD RECALLED HIS GOOD TALK WITH THE SECRETARY, WITH WHICH HE THOUGHT BOTH HE AND THE SECRETARY WERE PLEASED. THE SHAH HAD ALSO THOUGHT THAT THE SECRETARY HAD LEFT KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING THE SHAH'S NEEDS IN THE MILITARY FIELD FOR THE SECURITY OF HIS COUNTRY. HE SUBSEQUENTLY HOWEVER, RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT ABOUT A NEW U.S. POLICY. UNDER THIS POLICY NATO., AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, JAPAN AND ISRAEL WOULD HAVE A PRIVILEGED

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POSITION AND RECEIVE WHAT THEY WANTED, WHEREAS IT APPEARED THAT IRAN WAS OF NO SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE U.S. THIS WAS DISAPPOINTING AND DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND, GIVEN IRAN'S MEMBERSHIP IN CENTO AND ITS BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S., DESPITE WHICH IT WAS NOT BEING ACCORDED THE POSITION OF AN ALLY. THE SHAH HAD THEN RECALLED INSTANCES OF HIS SUPPORT FOR THE

U.S. IN THE PAST, INCLUDING AT THE TIME OF THE ARAB OIL EMBARGO IN 1973-74. IN LIGHT OF THE NEW U.S. POLICY, THE SHAH ASKED, WAS THIS A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP?

IF THE U.S. DID NOT WANT A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP, THIS MUST BE A TWO-WAY STREET. HE HAD ALWAYS WANTED A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. BUT HAD AN OBLIGATION TO HIS PEOPLE FOR THEIR SECURITY AND COULD ALWAYS TURN TO EUROPE IF HE COULD NOT RECEIVE WHAT HE NEEDED FROM THE U.S.

3. ZAHEDI CONCLUDED THAT HE THOUGHT THERE WAS SOME MISUNDERSTANDING AND HAD THEREFORE ASKED TO SEE THE SECRETARY BEFORE REPLYING TO THE SHAH.

4. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT ZAHEDI COULD ASSURE HIS MAJESTY THAT THERE IS AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND IRAN. OUR ARMS POLICY DECISIONS HAD REFERRED BY NAME TO CERTAIN COUNTRIES WITH WHOM WE HAVE A SPECIAL TREATY RELATIONSHIP. THE SECRETARY THEN CALLED ZAHEDI'S ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE IN THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT'S ARMS POLICY DECISION: QUOTE: THESE CONTROLS WILL BE BINDING UNLESS EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES NECESSITATE A PRESIDENTIAL EXCEPTION OR WHERE I DETERMINE THAT COUNTRIES FRIENDLY TO THE U.S MUST DEPEND ON ADVANCED WEAPONRY TO OFFSET QUANTITATIVE AND OTHER DISADVANTAGES IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A REGIONAL BALANCE UNQUOTE. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH IT HAD NOT BEEN SPECIFICALLY NAMED, IRAN FALLS UNDER THIS PROVISION.

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AS WE HAD TOLD HIS MAJESTY, WE WANT TO DISCUSS IRAN'S REQUEST AND THE ONLY PROBLEM IS ONE OF TIMING RELATED TO THE NEED FOR CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. THE SECRETARY EMPHASIZED THAT NOTHING HAS CHANGED SINCE HIS TALK WITH THE SHAH.

5. AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE SULLIVAN ADDED THAT, DURING HIS MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT, THE LATTER HAD ASKED HIM TO CONVEY CERTAIN POINTS TO THE SHAH WHICH HE WOULD BE DOING AFTER HIS ARRIVAL. BRIEFLY, THESE WERE THAT THE QUESTION OF ARMS TRANSFER HAS TWO DIMENSIONS. FIRST, THERE ARE TOO MANY WEAPONS IN THE WORLD AND THE PRESIDENT WANTS TO REDUCE THAT NUMBER. WE ARE BEGINNING WITH OURSELVES AND THE SOVIET UNION THROUGH THE U.S.-SOVIET ARMS LIMITATION TALKS AND HAVE ALSO PROPOSED DISCUSSING WITH THE SOVIETS HOW THE TWO OF US CAN REDUCE OUR ARMS SALES TO OTHERS. SECONDLY, WE MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE ATTITUDE IN CONGRESS. OUR SALES TO IRAN THIS YEAR WILL BE LARGER THAN TO ANY OTHER COUNTRY

AND ABOUT ON HALF OF THE TOTAL. THIS AFFECTS THE
TIMING OF OUR APPROACHING CONGRESS ON ADDITIONAL
SALES FOR IRAN, BUT THE PRESIDENT HAD MADE CLEAR
THAT HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD IRAN AND ITS SECURITY NEEDS
IS POSITIVE.

6. THE SECRETARY ADDED THAT HE HAD TOLD THE PRESIDENT
HOW PLEASED HE HAD BEEN ABOUT HIS MEETING WITH THE SHAH AND
THAT HE WAS CERTAIN THE PRESIDENT AND THE SHAH WOULD SHARE MANY
COMMON VIEWS. THE PRESIDENT LOOKS FORWARD TO MEETING
HIS MAJESTY WHOM HE REGARDS AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S
OUTSTANDING STATESMEN AND WITH WHOM HE SEEKS DEEP,
FREINDLY AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONS.
VANCE

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